

**Iowa Department of Natural Resources
Natural Resource Commission**

ITEM

8a

DECISION

**TOPIC Electric Line Easement, Gladfelter Marsh Wildlife Management
Area, Hancock County--Crystal Lake Wind, LLC**

The Natural Resource Commission's approval is requested for the issuance of a permanent easement to Crystal Lake Wind, LLC for the right to overhang an electric transmission line above Gladfelter Marsh Wildlife Management Area in Hancock County.

The easement will accommodate construction of transmission lines serving a wind energy project. The easement area is a 25 foot wide by one quarter mile strip located along the northernmost boundary of the wildlife area, adjacent and parallel to an existing east-west county highway. The transmission line will be a minimum of 21.5 feet above the ground. Transmission line towers will be located in the county highway right-of- way.

No permanent structures will be located on the wildlife area. Wildlife Bureau staff have reviewed the project under the company's application for a construction permit and have determined any effect of the project on wildlife or planned management of the area will be negligible.

The consideration for the easement is \$3,125.

Linda Hanson, Administrator
Management Services Division
September 13, 2007

**Iowa Department of Natural Resources
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ITEM

8b

DECISION

**TOPIC Forest Legacy Conservation Easement, Allamakee County -- Ronald
H. and Rebecca J. Berns**

As part of the 1990 Farm Bill, congress created the Forest Legacy Program to identify and protect environmentally important private forestland threatened with conversion to non-forest uses. The program promotes the concepts of protecting “working forests” and allowing continuation of traditional forest uses as long as the landowners follow a state forester approved Forest Stewardship Plan.

The Forest Legacy Program is federally funded and will pay up to 75% of the total market value of a conservation easement (development rights) of private forests. Funding is dependent upon Congressional review for specific projects and tracts. Advanced private landowner applications are required to be reviewed and prioritized at the state level, then forwarded to the USDA Forest Service for national review and possible inclusion in the President’s Fiscal Year Budget.

In Iowa, our Forest Legacy application process is open year-round to any interested forestland owner in designating Forest Legacy areas. Applications are prioritized to properties that 1) possess a forest stewardship plan; 2) are close to or adjoin protected lands such as parks, forests, wildlife areas, etc.; 3) are threatened by conversion to non-forest use and 4) landowners are willing to contribute or donate to the minimum 25% non-federal match requirement. The Iowa Forest Stewardship Committee (members include Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, Conservation Districts of Iowa, Iowa Farm Bureau, Iowa State University, etc.) review applications each year and make recommendations to the State Forester for funding priorities.

In 2006, Iowa received federal funding approval to acquire a conservation easement from Ronald H. and Rebecca J. Berns of Monona, Iowa on 209 acres of forest land located at the S ½ of the SE ¼ of the SW ¼, the NE ¼ of the SW ¼ , the SE ¼ , except that parcel described in Book 97; Page 327, Section 26 , Township 96 N, Range 5W of the 5th principal meridian, Allamakee County, Iowa. The NE ¼ of the NW ¼ and the N ½ of the NE ¼ Section 35, Township 96N, Range 5W of the 5th Principal Meridian, Allamakee County, Iowa. The area is located just off Allamakee County Road X26 south of the City of Rossville, Iowa.

After a process of fair market appraisal by Ed Roach, ARA, and review appraisal by DNR Appraiser Rick Hansen, ARA, to meet federal standards, the Berns’ property conservation easement and development rights was valued at \$250,200. The Berns’ have signed an offer to sell a permanent conservation easement to the Department for 75% of the development rights for \$187,650 (Forest Legacy Federal Funds) and will donate \$62,550 to meet the federal 25% match requirement to the Department. This permanent conservation easement is perpetual and will be

recorded with the Allamakee County Recorder's Office being made part of the deed for the land. The Department will conduct annual monitoring inspections in cooperation with the landowner.

The Commission is asked to approve the Forest Legacy offer of \$187,650 and accept \$62,550 donation for the purchase of the permanent conservation easement on 209 acres of forest in Allamakee County from Ronald and Rebecca Berns.

Attachment

Linda Hanson, Administrator
Management Services Division
September 13, 2007